



## City of Newton, MA

# INVEST IN YOURSELF

December 2012 Health and Wellness Newsletter for Employees

## Seasonal Depression Awareness



The City Hall Health Maintenance Clinic will be held on **Tues., Dec. 11**, from 10 to 11 a.m. in Room 10A.

Get your blood pressure taken, ask medication questions or consult with the public health nurse about other health questions.

December marks the beginning of seasonal depression awareness month (also known as Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD). Lack of sunlight and resulting disruption of the body's internal clock, drop in serotonin levels (hormone that affects mood), and a disruption in melatonin levels can all play an important role in sleep patterns and mood.

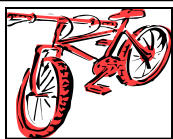
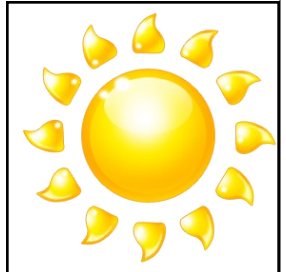
Seasonal Depression affects more females than males, and affects more people living farther from the equator. Genetics and past history of depression also play a role in whether you are at risk for seasonal depression. If you feel you

may be suffering from seasonal depression, contact your doctor to be evaluated.

There are many things you can do to prevent SAD for you and your family.

**Get outside!**– Yes, the weather is chilly and the snowflakes are falling, but throw on a few extra layers and go for a brisk walk or run, you'd be surprised how warm you get and how the sun helps you feel better! If you prefer warmer climates and refuse to exit the warmth of your home, open the blinds during the day or buy a lightbox if your home is very shady.

**Exercise Regularly**– Regular exercise helps to release stress and anxiety which can be triggers for SAD. Find a friend to walk outside with during your lunch hour, or attend a Zumba class at City Hall! Skiing, snowboarding, and ice skating are also fun activities that provide exercise and exposure to sunlight.



Bicycles are available for employee use. For details, contact Bike Manager Derek Valentine at [dvalentine@newtonma.gov](mailto:dvalentine@newtonma.gov)

## Outdoor Exercising Tips for the Winter

There's no harder time than the winter to motivate yourself to get outside and exercise. It's cold, monotonous, and many avoid it altogether. Here are some tips to get motivated and enjoy exercising in the winter months!

- Exercise with a friend– You aren't the only one who is looking to get some exercise and doing it with a friend can take the monotony out of your workout.
- The more layers the better– Two or three layers are sometimes required on chilly days to protect your body from the elements. Wear a hat to keep your head warm and mittens for your hands.
- The first few minutes are always hard– Just like getting into a chilly car, it takes your body a few minutes to warm up and get used to the weather.
- Positive self-talk helps– Keep Going! You're doing great! Almost there! (and having a motivated friend helps too!)



### Zumba

City Hall War Memorial  
5:15 to 6:15 p.m.  
\$10 drop in per class

Email [wellness@newtonma.gov](mailto:wellness@newtonma.gov) to join. You don't have to know how to dance, just be willing to move and have fun with a great group of people!



City of Newton, MA

# INVEST IN YOURSELF

December 2012



## Making New Year's Resolutions that Last

The holidays bring about happiness and family

togetherness, but they also bring about lots of food, high calorie meals, and non-nutritious sweets. As a result of this, many people fall into the same patterns every year while making New Year's resolutions: signing up for a gym membership, or joining a weight loss program, only to find that they are not going to the gym as consistently as they had hoped and their resolution is not coming to fruition. Many people find this discouraging, and tell themselves they'll do better next year.

This New Year's, try to set realistic goals for yourself.

Make them SMART — specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-defined.

**Specific** goals get down to the details of what you want to do. Instead of losing weight, be specific about how much you want to lose.

Instead of "eating better," figure out how many servings of fruit and vegetables you need each day.

Make your goal **measurable** and keep track of your progress. If you want to exercise more, decide how many minutes per week to exercise and track your progress with a stop watch when you exercise.

Choose **attainable** and realistic goals that are right for you. Losing 50 pounds before a wedding or class reunion two months away is not only unhealthy, but highly unlikely no matter what you do. Losing a pound or two a week by healthy changes to your diet and exercising more is realistic.

Choose goals that are **relevant** and important to you so you will be more motivated to achieve them. Setting a health goal to limit time spent watching television is great, but if you don't watch television anyway, it's irrelevant to your health.

Consider **time** when you set your

goals. Give yourself a deadline. Or at least set a time when you will review your goal to make any adjustments, particularly if you have achieved your goal and want to set a new one.

Here are some example of "sticky" health goals:

"Eat fruit for dessert instead of sweets on 6 of 7 days per week for the next 3 months."

"Sign up and attend a new fitness class by the beginning of February."

"Park the car across the street from the office 4 of 5 days a week for a month."

## FRESH CORN SOUP

*Nothing like a nice bowl of soup on a chilly December night!*



### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 6 large ears of corn, husked and kernels scraped off
- 5 cups chicken stock
- 3 tbsp. fresh basil, chopped

### Directions

1. Sauté onion and garlic on medium heat in a large pot
2. Add corn and stock partially covered for 25 minutes, cool for 20 minutes more
3. Using ladle, scoop out 2 cups of the corn and blend, add basil
4. Blend until mixture is smooth ~2 minutes.
5. Add the blended soup back to the soup pot and stir well.
6. Add crushed black pepper or pinch of salt if needed.

*Taken from chopchopmag.org*

## EXTREME WINTER WEATHER: THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW FOR YOUR HEALTH



- Be sure your carbon monoxide detectors are working. During the winter, more fuel is burned by homes and in enclosed areas, this harmful gas can build up and cause serious health problems, even death.
- If you are going to be outside for a long period of time, be sure to wear many layers.
- Slip and fall injuries are more frequent in the winter. Be sure to walk slowly and carefully whenever you're on a hard surface and beware of black ice.
- If you or your family are participating in winter sports such as skiing, be sure to wear a helmet to prevent head injuries.